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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION:
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 18 January 1996 from the Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from our Governments, we have the honour to submit the text of the Joint Russian-Iranian Statement on the Caspian Sea signed by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Mr. A. Bolshakov, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, on 30 October 1995 at Teheran (see annex).

We should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly under the item entitled "Sustainable development and international economic cooperation: science and technology for development".

(Signed) Kamal KHARRAZI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
the Islamic Republic of Iran
to the United Nations

(Signed) Sergey V. LAVROV
Ambassador
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ANNEX

Joint Russian-Iranian Statement on the Caspian Sea, issued at Teheran on 30 October 1995

[Original: Russian]

Russian-Iranian talks were held at Teheran from 29 to 31 October 1995 concerning issues related to the legal status of the Caspian Sea and the arrangement of cooperation among Caspian coastal States. The parties reached the following mutual understanding:

1. The problems of the legal status and regime of the Caspian Sea, which is a unique body of water, are of a purely regional nature. Any issues relating to regulation of the uses of the Caspian Sea and its resources shall be decided, in the context of international treaties, jointly by all the Caspian coastal States (Russia, Iran, Azerbaijan, Kazakstan and Turkmenistan), bearing in mind their equal rights and mutual interests. All rights with respect to the Caspian Sea and its resources belong to the coastal States, and only they are entitled to lay down rules for activity in the Caspian.

2. Mutual relations between the coastal States in the Caspian Sea shall be governed by the principles of respect for State sovereignty, good-neighbourliness, mutually beneficial cooperation, partnership on an equal footing, and the non-use of force or the threat of force. The Caspian Sea shall be used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

3. The coastal States alone have strategic interests in the Caspian Sea, and no claims by other States in this connection may be entertained. Third countries shall not be entitled to dictate to the coastal States in what forms and by what methods use shall be made of the Caspian.

4. The coastal States shall be directly responsible for preserving the unique ecosystem of the Caspian Sea. No activity shall be conducted in such a manner as to damage the Sea's natural environment.

5. All issues relating to the Caspian Sea, including determination of its legal status, shall be settled on the basis of consensus among all the coastal States.

6. Consultations should be continued on the elaboration and conclusion of separate agreements concerning preservation of the Caspian Sea ecosystem and living resources, as well as navigation on the Sea.

7. Rules shall be worked out for the exploitation of Caspian Sea mineral resources; until such time as the rules are worked out, unilateral actions by coastal States shall not be permitted. Coastal countries may not undertake actions leading to a division of the Caspian Sea without the agreement of all the other coastal countries.

8. An organization should be established for cooperation among the Caspian coastal States and an effective permanent mechanism determined for coordination of their actions.

9. Five-party consultations need to continue, on a rotating basis, for the purpose of updating the legal status of the Caspian Sea.

(Signed) A. A. BOLSHAKOV
Deputy Prime Minister
of the Russian Federation

(Signed) A. A. VELAYATI
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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